# UK Student Visa Guide for International Students

Your complete, official guide to studying in the United Kingdom — sourced from GOV.UK guidance updated November 2025.

# Are You Eligible? 4 Core Requirements

1

## Licensed Sponsor Offer

Your university or college must appear on the UK's official **Register of Licensed Student Sponsors**

2

## English Language

You must prove you can **speak, read, write and understand** English to the required level

3

## Financial Proof

Demonstrate you can pay your **tuition fees** and support yourself during your studies

4

## Parental Consent

Required if you are **16 or 17 years old** — written consent from a parent or guardian

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# Your CAS: The Key to Your Application

Your **Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)** is the unique reference number your university issues once you accept an unconditional offer. You cannot apply for a Student visa without it.

## Apply Within 6 Months

You must submit your visa application within **6 months** of receiving your CAS

## Earliest Application Window

**6 months before** course start (outside UK) or **3 months before** (inside UK)

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# Financial Requirements: How Much Do You Need?

### 📍 London Institutions

**£1,529/month** × up to 9 months
Maximum living costs: **£13,761**

### 🏙️ Outside London

**£1,171/month** × up to 9 months
Maximum living costs: **£10,539**

Plus your full course **tuition fees** as listed on your CAS.

## The 28-Day Rule

Your funds must sit in your bank account for **28 consecutive days** before you apply. The end date of that 28-day window must fall within **31 days** of your visa application date.

⚠️ Do not move or spend these funds during the 28-day window — the balance must remain at or above the required amount for the entire period.

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# Documents You Must Provide

## Mandatory Documents

A **valid passport** or travel document, plus your **CAS reference number** from your course provider

## Financial Evidence

**Bank statements** clearly showing the required maintenance funds held for 28 or more consecutive days

## TB Test Results

Required for applicants from **certain countries** — check GOV.UK to see if this applies to you

## ATAS Certificate

Needed if studying **sensitive subjects** at postgraduate level — Academic Technology Approval Scheme

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# Visa Fees & Processing Time

## £524

### Application Fee

Main applicant and any dependants

## £776

### IHS Per Year

Immigration Health Surcharge — unlocks full NHS access

## How Long Will You Wait?

- **Outside the UK:** Decision usually within **3 weeks**
- **Inside the UK:** Decision usually within **8 weeks**
- **Priority Service:** Faster decisions available for an additional fee

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# How Long Can You Stay?

Your visa duration depends on the **level of your course**. The UK uses the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) to determine length of stay.
You can **extend your visa** to continue studying or switch to another visa type when your circumstances change.

## 🎓 Degree Level (RQF 6+)

Stay for up to **5 years** — covers bachelor's, master's, and PhD programmes

## 📚 Below Degree Level

Stay for up to **2 years** — foundation, diploma, and pre-sessional courses

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# Work Rights on a Student Visa

## During Term Time

Up to **20 hours per week** (full-time degree courses). A "week" is defined as Monday to Sunday.

## During Vacations

**Full-time work** is permitted during official university vacation periods

## Work Placements

**Full-time** if it is an assessed part of your course — maximum 50% of total course length

## Not Permitted

**No self-employment**, running a business, or working as a professional sportsperson or entertainer

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# After You Graduate: The Graduate Route Visa

Stay and work — or look for work — in the UK after completing your degree. **No job offer required** to apply.

1

## Apply Before Your Student Visa Expires

You must be **in the UK** when you submit your Graduate visa application

2

## Duration: Apply by 31 Dec 2026

**2 years** (bachelor's / master's) or **3 years** (PhD)

3

## Duration: Apply from Jan 2027

**18 months** (bachelor's / master's) or **3 years** (PhD)

4

## Long-Term Next Step

Switch to a **Skilled Worker visa** for permanent UK employment after Graduate Route

# Sources


- Student visa: Overview — GOV.UK
- Student visa: Your course — GOV.UK
- Student visa: Money you need — GOV.UK
- Student visa: Documents you'll need to apply — GOV.UK
- Home Office immigration and nationality fees, 11 November 2025 — GOV.UK
- Working in the United Kingdom under a student visa—City St George's, University of London
- Graduate visa: Overview — GOV.UK


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